

**ABSTRACT****INFORMATION ACCESS**

5 An apparatus 100 is provided to enable information sets stored in an information system and accessible over a communications network to be shared among a group of users. The apparatus 100 is provided with data storage to store a user profile for each user, each user profile comprising at least one keyword expressing an interest of the respective user, and for storing meta-information 10 relating to information sets stored in the information system. The apparatus is provided with means to enable a first user to input an information set, to generate meta-information for that information set, to compare the generated meta-information with stored user profiles of the other users and thereby to alert the first user to the identity of one or more users having a shared interest in the input 15 information set.

The apparatus 100 is also enabled to compare the user profile of a first user with profiles of other users to enable the first user to identify other users having similar interests and to enable the first user to send an alert message to one or more of those selected users.